

**OFFICIAL VISIT OF THE HOLY FATHER
TO H.E. Mr GIORGIO NAPOLITANO
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ITALY
ADDRESS OF POPE FRANCIS**
Quirinal Palace

14 November 2013

[Link](#)

[...] The Church's primary task is to bear witness to the mercy of God and to encourage generous reactions of solidarity in order to open a future of hope. For where hope increases, energy and commitment to building a more human and just social order also grows, and new possibilities for sustainable and healthy development emerge.

My first pastoral visits within Italy are still impressed in my memory. Above all Lampedusa, where I came into contact with the suffering of those who, on account of war or of indigence, risk emigrating in oftentimes desperate conditions. There I also saw the praiseworthy example of solidarity offered by so many who are doing their very best to offer a service of welcome.[...]